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Citation for published version:

Tisdall, EKM & Elsley, S 2012, *Exploring new paths: Children and Young People Influencing Policy in Scotland*. Children in Scotland, Edinburgh.
<http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/docs/CISAUGSUPPfinalV8FINAL_new.p>

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publisher Rights Statement:

© Tisdall, K., & Elsley, S. (2012) Exploring new paths: Children and Young People Influencing Policy in Scotland 12pp.

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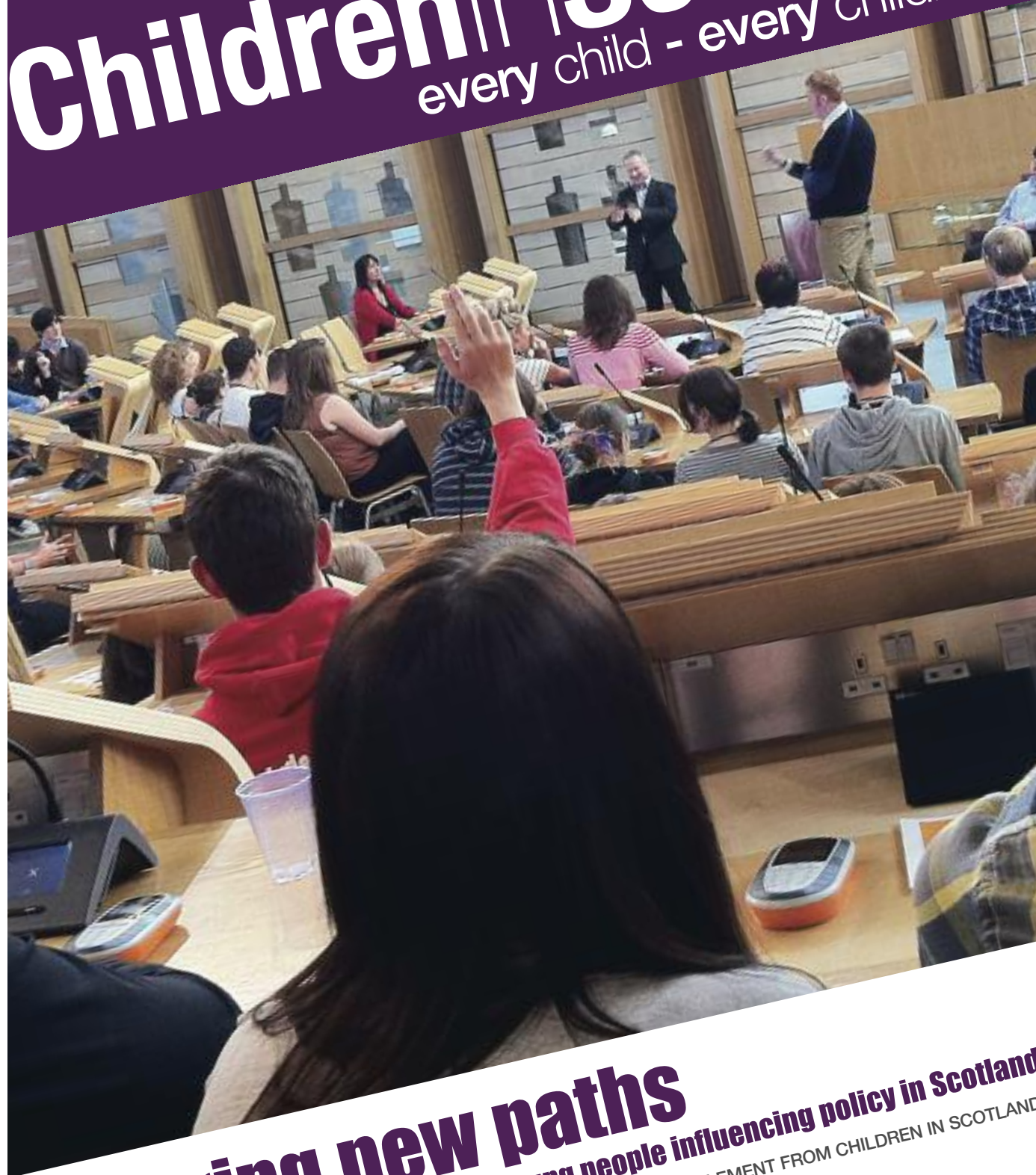
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August 2012

Children in Scotland

every child - every childhood



Exploring new paths

children and young people influencing policy in Scotland

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT FROM CHILDREN IN SCOTLAND

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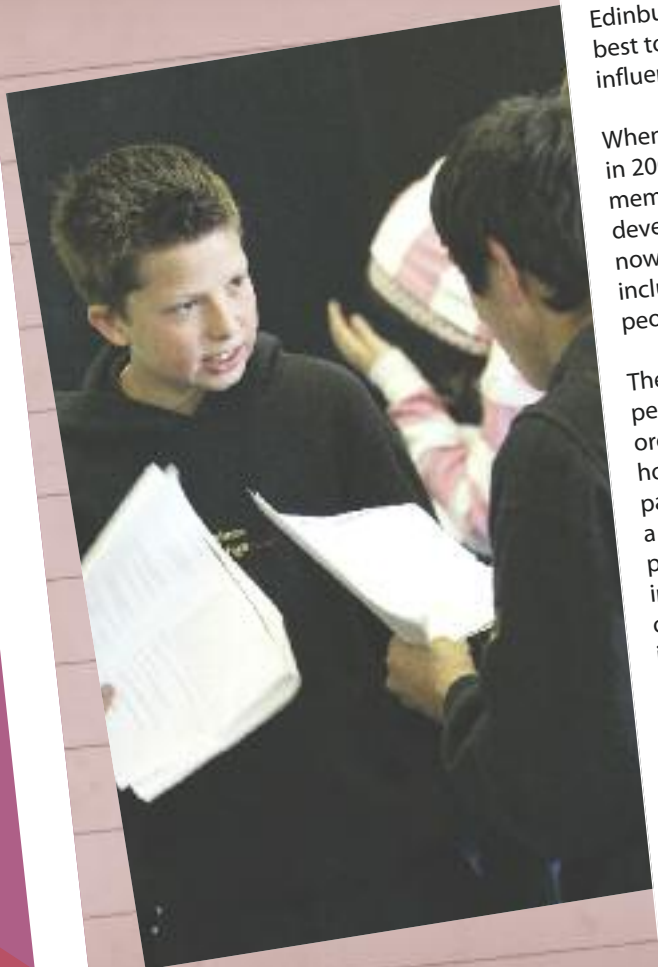
Welcome to this special supplement to *Children in Scotland*, focusing on a partnership project that involved Barnardo's, the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh, and Children in Scotland in exploring how best to support children and young people in influencing public policy in Scotland.

When Scotland's Children's Sector Forum was set up in 2009 its aim was to enable Children in Scotland members to contribute more actively in jointly developing and influencing public policy. The project, now in its final stages, is intended to develop ways of including the views and voices of children and young people more effectively in Forum discussions.

The project focused on how children's and young people's views could be routinely sought by organisations with which they were involved, and how this knowledge could inform members' participation in the Forum. We also wanted to ensure a genuine, demonstrable and sustainable impact on policy as a result of the project's work. Our approach involved supporting a broad range of member organisations to develop robust methods of routinely involving children and young people in policy issues, both to inform developments within their own organisations and to contribute to the Forum's policy dialogue. Their experiences, and the underpinning work of the project team, are described here.

Recommendations and suggestions on the future activities and structure of the Forum will be one outcome from the work that has taken place.

We also hope this supplement will be of use to our members and influential in policy making at all levels.



This special supplement is sponsored by Barnardo's, Scotland's Children's Sector Forum,

CRFR, and ESRC

Children in Scotland supplements

Exploring new paths: children and young people influencing policy in Scotland is the second in a series of regular special supplements to *Children in Scotland* magazine, each focusing on a topical issue in the children and young people's sector and providing in-depth coverage and comment. Future supplements will look at developments in **childcare** and **play**.

Sponsorship and advertising options in each supplement offer an opportunity to showcase products or services and current campaigns or key messages in a highly effective and targeted way. Through this you could reach around 10,000 people in the children's workforce throughout Scotland, including many key decision makers and budget holders.

For further information on forthcoming issues, sponsorship and advertising rates call Graham Macready on 0131 222 2411, or email gmacready@childreninscotland.org.uk



Front cover photo: Scottish Youth Parliament.
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Children and Young People Influencing Policy in Scotland

Children in Scotland, the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR) at the University of Edinburgh, and Barnardo's Scotland formed a year-long partnership to develop better ways of involving children and young people in influencing policy that affects them and ensuring their voices are heard. This initiative was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council Follow on Fund.

Spring 2011

- Work begins
- Discussion of wider issues with interested groups

Summer 2011

- Think Tank with stakeholders to discuss and share good practice

Autumn/Winter 2011/12

- Research Briefing disseminated following Think Tank event
- Recruitment of programme participants
- Work begins with participants – starting with two workshop events

Spring 2012

- Core individual participation work with five organisations
- Scotland's Children's Sector Forum meeting led by participating organisation: another presented at a meeting of the Cross Party Group on Children and Young People
- Final workshop session

Summer 2012

- Conclusion of initiative
- Second Research Briefing published
- Presentation at conferences
- Academic and journal papers
- Feeds into plans for future work of Scotland's Children's Sector Forum

The programme team included **Jacqui Dunbar** and **Selwyn McCausland** of Barnardo's Scotland; **Kay Tisdall** and **Susan Elsley** of the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh; and **Sara Collier**, **Marion Macleod** and **Jonathan Sher** of Children in Scotland

Scotland's Children's Sector Forum

Scotland's Children's Sector Forum brings together Children in Scotland members from across the Scottish children's and young people's sector to share knowledge and views, discuss current issues and mobilise a united voice to influence policy on behalf of children, young people and their families.

Set up in 2009, the Forum has held meetings and discussions on a wide range of topics including Children's Hearings reform, funding of children's policy work, the Scottish Government's legislative programme and European early years policy. It has also hosted Q&A sessions with MSPs and other influential speakers.

Meetings provide opportunities to link with other organisations, for example in the working group looking at the rights element currently proposed in the Children and Young People Bill. The Forum has also facilitated smaller *ad hoc* gatherings to discuss issues of common interest among members, such as the proposed Alcohol

(Public Health and Criminal Justice) Bill.

Any member of Children in Scotland can participate in Forum activities or join the group mailing list. It can be especially helpful for organisations with no in-house policy staff, or without the capacity to respond to every consultation affecting children and young people. As the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland, Children in Scotland and the Forum helps ensure the voices of children, young people and their families are heard in the policy making process.

We want to hear from you!

- Are you part of Scotland's Children's Sector Forum? Why/Why not?
- What topics should the Forum be discussing and taking forward?
- What type of meetings would be of most use to you?
- Do you wish you had more networking opportunities within the children's sector?
- Are you interested in discussing and influencing the proposed Children and Young People Bill?
- Would you like to join the Forum mailing list?

Email policy@childreninscotland.org.uk or call Sara Collier on 0131 222 2412 to let us know!



Photo: Malcolm Cochrane for Grounds for Learning. Used by permission.

Pathways to participation

GOOD INTENTIONS ALONE WON'T BRING ABOUT CHANGE. A THINK TANK ORGANISED BY THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON FAMILIES AND RELATIONSHIPS LOOKED AT THE ACTIONS THAT ARE NEEDED TO AVOID TOKENISM

Over the last decade we've become used to the rhetoric of participation in policy and practice relating to children and young people. In Scotland alone, participation activities have proliferated. But how do we make sure these have a lasting impact and become firmly embedded in structures and services – rather than becoming simply a tokenistic 'fad' leading to consultation fatigue?

This is the question addressed by this programme of work, which brought together Barnardo's Scotland's expertise

in supporting children and young people's participation, Children in Scotland's experience of influencing national policy making, and research by the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR) at the University of Edinburgh.

A significant event early in the programme was a Think Tank for local and national government officials, academics and practitioners, and children and young people with experience of public policy participation. This looked at the challenges facing

children and young people, and those who support them, when they seek to influence policy. It was also a chance to suggest changes that could be made to build on strengths in current practice.

The Think Tank acknowledged we should not underestimate the extent to which adult processes and structures exclude children and young people. Because children have no vote, their engagement tends not to be seen as political, and it can be easy for their contributions to be marginalised. This is reinforced by the tendency in society as

a whole to regard children as 'adults in the making'; rather than valid members of the community here and now. Children and young people's participation may be sidelined if their advice and recommendations counter views of other, more powerful (and usually adult) groups.

In practice, participation by children and young people may be regarded as a specialist activity rather than part of mainstream governmental or voluntary sector processes, meaning their views are not integrated effectively into how policy decisions are made, implemented and evaluated. Policy development timetables may not build in enough time to involve them meaningfully at stages when their views could have a significant influence.

The result can be tokenism, with consultation taking place but having no discernible impact on decisions. Unless there is effective feedback children and young people may be unaware of how their contributions are being used, and too often a one-off activity fails to develop into an ongoing dialogue. Children and young people recognise and resent this waste of their time and energies as readily as adults in a similar situation.

Participation programmes can be difficult to sustain, as they are often supported by short term funding. When this comes to an end, or if key staff move on, consultations tend to stop rather than other resourcing being investigated (as is more likely to happen with adult services).

Other challenges relate to who is included, or excluded. Some children and young people risk being 'over-consulted' – frequently asked for their views and increasingly frustrated at the lack of subsequent action – while others are never reached by participation activities as they are not in touch with supporting organisations or forums. Frequently the false assumption is made that they are speaking on behalf of the majority of their peers, although the participation process may never have been set up in such a way as to create or support this level of representation.

However there are also many strengths in what is happening at present. A

Government commitment to participation has helped raise expectations that views will be sought and heard, both among children and young people themselves, and at the decision and policy making level. A growing number of practitioners, managers and policymakers are committed to children and young people's participation, and new technology makes it easier to consult more inclusively and on a wider scale. And as all involved learn from their experiences of supporting children and young people in participating, more effective ways to work together are being developed and understood.

Those at the Think Tank recognised the need for a widespread cultural change in organisations, policy making and society at large, with a shift towards greater respect for the views and perspectives of children and young people. This is the first step on the way to realising the importance and value of their contributions to the policy making process, and making the necessary adaptations to help this happen: for example using simpler language in formulating policy and being realistic about timescales to allow involvement in every stage, from formation to finalisation and implementation.

Putting in place policy and legal requirements and incentives could back up the commitment to participation, along with better training for professionals and practitioners. Exploring different methods of consultation could be useful, along with allowing children and young people the ultimate participation tool of the vote, as is the norm elsewhere at some levels of government.

Initial evaluations show those Children in Scotland member organisations taking part in the programme found it helpful and supportive. They appreciated the support of a large national voluntary agency, Barnardo's Scotland, to help them explore the participation of children and young

... we should not underestimate the extent to which adult processes and structures exclude children and young people

people in their own organisation. Networking with other participants in the workshop programme was welcomed as an opportunity to share experience and learn from others. The tailored consultancy support during the second part of the programme was seen as particularly useful, helping organisations focus on areas they wanted to develop strategically. A number of ongoing activities and contacts have been

generated as a result.

Several pointers emerged in considering how better to support children and young people's participation. Child rights approaches to help assess current organisational practice were helpful. Recognising the impact of organisational culture, the importance of building on internal energy, and the ability to respond to changing contexts were clear levers to promoting the participation of children and young people in influencing policy.

Findings from the programme will be published in the autumn of 2012, along with key recommendations.

The Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh is working with Barnardo's Scotland to evaluate the programme. For more information about the project, see http://www.crfr.ac.uk/research/projects/rp_c&ypparticipation.html

You can download the full Think Tank Briefing 'Children and young people's participation in policy-making' free of charge from www.crfr.ac.uk/reports/Participation%20briefing.pdf

The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (RES-189-25-0174). Supporting research for the initiative was undertaken by Susan Elsley, Kay Tisdall and colleagues, and funded by the Big Lottery Fund, the British Academy, the Economic and Social Research Council, the European Research Council, The Leverhulme Trust and the Royal Society of Edinburgh

Pathways to Influencing Policy programme

THE PROGRAMME HAS GIVEN ORGANISATIONS THE CHANCE TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE, RESOURCES AND PRACTICE TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE SHAPE POLICY. JACQUI DUNBAR EXPLAINS HOW IT WORKED



Photo: © Scottish Parliament

The origins of the programme go back to 2008, when the participation development team at Barnardo's Scotland devised a 12-month programme to support their own services in developing participation practice with children and young people.

The programme focused on building capacity among staff and was piloted in seven Barnardo's Scotland services over a 2-year period. As a result staff teams reported feeling more skilled in this area, and children's participation became more integral to their practice. In 2011 the participation development

team developed the programme further to look specifically at how children and young people could be better supported in influencing public policy in Scotland.

As part of Barnardo's Scotland's commitment we offered to work in partnership with five organisations using the Pathways to Influencing Policy programme. The programme was compressed to fit the timeframe of this 1-year funded partnership, with the key elements as follows:

- an audit of existing practice;
- two core workshops, on influencing

public policy and children's rights/participation;

- two additional sessions, comprising workshops or consultancy specific to the organisation concerned;
- work with children and young people within organisations where appropriate; and
- a continual process of research, review and evaluation.

The initial call for interest through Children in Scotland was narrowed down to the five organisations that offered the greatest range of services to children and young people. These were Stirling Council Youth Services; Grounds

for Learning; the National Deaf Children's Society; NHS Forth Valley; and respectme.

The team made introductory visits to all five organisations to provide an overview of the programme, complete a working agreement and identify participants. Staff completed a detailed survey designed to promote thinking around current practice and to identify areas for development. This, along with information gathered during the initial meetings, allowed the team to create baseline information for all five organisations.

A total of 12 staff came together for two core workshops at Barnardo's Scotland's headquarters. The first focused on explaining the roles of the partners, setting the scene for the programme and exploring the context for children and young people's influencing of policy in Scotland. Barnardo's Scotland's policy and parliamentary officer Richard Meade used a visual timeline to show how policy is formed and the key influencing points and opportunities within Scottish political structures. This generated thinking and debate both around these influencing points and more widely around the range of routes to influence.

The second workshop gave participants a chance to share their knowledge, practice and experience in this area. Staff highlighted the fact that children and young people had a greater chance of influencing policy if they had a range of opportunities at both personal and local levels that helped them build confidence and skills in this area. Among the key themes and messages to emerge were:

- the importance of an enabling culture within organisations to support children and young people to influence policy;
- the need for creative, fun and relevant methods of engaging children and young people; and
- ensuring attention is given to what difference children and young people's influence makes and holding decision makers accountable for change.

Barnardo's Scotland's staff led a presentation focusing on children's rights and participation. The core

Youth Services

"The Pathways programme has refreshed our thinking and given us the impetus to ask questions about everything we do," says Bill Miller of Youth Services, part of Employment, Communities and Youth at Stirling Council.

Youth Services supports young people aged 11–25 to be confident, skilled, self sufficient, independent and responsible members of their communities. The service has four key areas: community based youth work, employability, one to one support, and capacity building.

Stirling Council is implementing the Public Service Improvement Framework across all services, and Pathways principles will be integrated as a way of reshaping the approach to work with young people. The intention is to make the Shier model a core feature of partnerships with organisations working with children and young people to influence local policy and strategy.

Youth Services became involved in the initiative to develop the awareness and role of staff, and to make a significant difference to the lives of children and young people in Stirling by recognising and placing their rights at the heart of policy and practice development.

"We want the approach to be part of everything we do, not considered an add on," says Miller. "That will be a challenge in itself, but one we are up for."



principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) set a valuable framework for how we work with children and young people in general but also around influencing policy.

- **Non discrimination:** No child or young person should be treated unfairly on any basis – they have the right to be protected against all forms of discrimination.
- **Best interests:** All actions concerning the child or young person should take full account of his or her best interests.

- **Survival and development:** Children and young people should be protected from harm and supported to achieve their maximum potential.
- **Participation:** Children and young people have the right to express their opinions freely and to have their opinions taken into account in any matter affecting them, in ways appropriate to their age and maturity.
- **Awareness:** All children and young people should be made aware of their rights and how to access them.

Participants were introduced to Shier's

Forth Valley

One of NHS Scotland's policy drivers is to ensure services are person centred, and NHS Forth Valley wanted to be involved with the Pathways programme to gain support and advice on strengthening the involvement of children and young people in developing services.

"We felt there was quite an urgent need to focus on teenagers' experience of the emergency department at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, especially those who go on to be admitted," says patient focus public involvement coordinator Lesley Sherwood. "Being involved in the initiative definitely got us kick-started in thinking about how to involve children, which groups to prioritise and how we might go about it."

For more information contact Lesley Sherwood at lesley.sherwood@nhs.net

Pathways to Participation, developed by Harry Shier in 2001, as a theoretical model and tool to help consider practice within their organisations. This model has been used widely within Barnardo's Scotland and helps create a picture of strengths and areas for development. This was followed by an overview of the *Social Care Institute for Excellence's Participation Practice Guide*, developed in 2006 by Barnardo's UK policy and influencing unit. This is a comprehensive guide to developing children and young people's participation methodically through a whole systems approach. It acknowledges that to embed children's participation an organisation must develop an appropriate culture, supportive structures and good practice, and must ensure effective review systems are in place.

Beyond the core workshops each organisation was offered a further two sessions specific to their needs and developmental areas. Each organisation had different priorities and they used the sessions in diverse ways. For example, Stirling Council chose to deliver training to the Youth Services staff team and their partner agencies. Service manager Bill Miller felt the Shier model had provided "a significant tool that will allow us to measure our progress individually and collectively". The National Deaf Children's Society Scotland used their two sessions to explore and develop their thinking around young deaf people's ability to influence the work of the Society at a Scottish level, while both NHS Forth Valley and Grounds for Learning chose to use their additional sessions in more of a consultative role. NHS Forth Valley

explored ways of developing consultation with young people over

their care when being admitted to emergency services, while as a direct result of the initiative Alistair Seaman of Grounds for Learning presented at the Cross Party Group For Children And Young People in May which focused on health, wellbeing and the curriculum.

Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service *respectme* facilitated a Scotland Children's Sector Forum meeting focusing on disseminating current research and good practice in anti-bullying policy development. The session included presentations from *respectme* director Brian Donnelly, who shared new thinking around anti-bullying, and partnership manager Lorraine Glass, who focused on findings from their recent cyberbullying

Grounds for Learning

The Pathways programme gave Grounds for Learning, who aim to enrich children's lives by helping them develop outdoor learning and play, a chance to think about how they could better support children and young people in communicating their views on outdoor play spaces to decision and policy makers.



Photo: Malcolm Cochrane for Grounds for Learning. Used by permission

Involving children in the process of improving their outdoor spaces at school or nursery has always formed part of their work, says strategic development manager Alastair Seaman. "We've been exploring how much policy making is decided at local rather than national level, and thinking about how children and young people can communicate key messages to the right people," he explains. "The main idea that emerged is some kind of 'children's manifesto' for school playgrounds that captures key messages and ideas."

For a small team with limited funding, it's good this can be developed from work that is part of another project.

"The benefit [of Pathways] for us was having access to advice from people who have skills and experience in this area," Seaman says. "We also benefited from meeting other organisations exploring similar issues and ideas."

For more information on the work of Grounds for Learning, visit www.ltl.org.uk/scotland/

respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service

respectme has a remit from the Scottish Government to lead on developing and implementing national anti-bullying policies and practices, and to support adults in responding effectively to bullying behaviour. It encourages partner organisations actively to seek young people's participation in shaping policy and practice, and for partnership manager Lorraine Glass the Pathways programme was a chance to focus on learning new methods and sharing good practice.

"We enhanced our understanding of the ethical issues in involving children and young people," she said. "We also gained experience of methods that can engage young audiences and respond to their interests and skills. The value of this lies in being able to recommend a menu of methods to our partners in a variety of settings."

Participating in the programme affirmed respectme's current approach and advice to partners as valid, influential and relevant.

Coinciding with the initiative, respectme was invited by Scottish Borders Council to join the Advisory Board on a model for anti-bullying policy that included setting up a Youth Commission, and were able to witness first hand the methods and practices of participation applied by council staff working with the youth commissioners.



Photo: respectme

"Watching the process of true engagement, full participation, genuine leadership and the individual development of the young people involved was inspiring," said Lorraine.

For more information on the work of respectme, visit www.respectme.org.uk

campaign. The session culminated with a presentation from Susan Robb, participation officer for Scottish Borders Council, into their youth commissioners approach to developing an authority wide anti-bullying policy. This unique event was received very positively and gave Children in Scotland another model to consider for future meetings.

Throughout the Pathways to Influencing Policy programme, staff were involved in discussion and research with CRFR's Susan Elsley, which enabled people's learning journey to be captured in detail. The end of the programme was marked by a networking lunch which allowed everyone to share their experiences while making connections for future work. It seemed like a fitting and productive way to end this part of the Initiative.

Barnardo's Scotland would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the Pathways Programme for their time, enthusiasm and participation. For further information contact jacqui.dunbar@barnardos.org.uk

National Deaf Children's Society Scotland

"A highlight of the year" was how Jan Savage, director of the National Deaf Children's Society Scotland, described involvement in Pathways.

Involvement of deaf children and young people in influencing the policy agenda is in its infancy in Scotland, but the initiative allowed NDCS Scotland to identify current strengths and build capacity to engage with them.

During the project young deaf people attended party conferences to promote NDCS campaigns, and took part in consultation meetings to inform NHS and Scottish Government policy. A youth campaigns network was set up to continue engagement, and interested young people will be able to participate in a new advisory committee for NDCS Scotland.

"It gave us the chance to consolidate existing skills whilst accessing new tools and models of youth participation," said Jan Savage. "The partners were a joy to work with and really embraced the concept of partnership working. We hope to continue our relationship informally and are currently working with Barnardo's to support young deaf volunteers to participate in their Youth Achievement Scotland Awards." *Further developments are planned as NDCS Scotland is committed to continuing the work begun through this initiative. For more information email ndcs.scotland@ndcs.org.uk*



Photo: NDCS © Rachael Thibbotumunuwe/Street Level Photoworks

Pathways and parliament

As part of their contribution to the programme, Grounds for Learning made a presentation to the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Children and Young People in May.

The theme was health, wellbeing and the curriculum, with the meeting attended by six MSPs and more than 40 representatives from the children and young people's sector.

Grounds for Learning strategic development manager Alastair Seaman examined how child-led natural play contributes to and impacts on behaviour and creativity, with examples from schools across

Scotland. Positive outcomes of the approach include raised staff morale, increased physical activity and improvements in behaviour, social skills and creativity. The Scottish Government is supporting 30 more schools in this approach over the next 3 years, creating a network of schools committed to developing play and outdoor learning and to sharing experience and practice.

Among the questions put to the group were:

- Why is Education Scotland not more interested in play beyond early years?

- Why does our £13m *per annum* active schools programme focus on sport and fail to support active outdoor play?
- We're spending £1.25 billion on new schools – how do we avoid the poor playground facilities of the past?
- Why is work in this area usually led by individual parents or teachers and not by local authorities?

To receive more information on this Cross Party Group please contact policy@childreninscotland.org.uk or call 0131 222 2412.

Pathways in practice

Scotland's Children's Sector Forum in May gave member organisation *respectme* the chance to share developments in anti-bullying policy and practice.

respectme challenges existing thinking on bullying, which can result in children being labelled or bullying being defined by persistence and intent of the behaviour, when instead the focus should be its impact. Director Brian Donnelly described the loss of agency children and young people say they feel when bullied, leading to a sense they are not in control of themselves and feelings of being trapped, lost and frightened. The priority must be to help young

people regain this sense of agency, not focus on the behaviour: "what was the impact and what can I do about that?" are the key questions. Children and young people can and do bully others to gain a sense of agency and control, and meaningful communication and relationships are crucial in dealing with bullying.

Online relationships are often not significantly different to those offline, but people should remember online communication can be more ambiguous and open to misunderstanding, said *respectme*'s partnership manager Lorraine Glass in her presentation *Cyberbullying ... what do I need to know?*

Young people see the internet as a virtual 'place' where they hang out, share friendships and sometimes have conflict. Adults have to recognise this and ensure boundaries and safeguards are in place, exactly as they would in the non-virtual world. Others' privacy has to be respected, and personal information kept secure. Young people need to be made aware that everything is traceable online, and that some actions may have legal consequences. The *respectme* resource *Cyberbullying ... are you switched on?* includes advice on listening to the child or young person and working with them on a plan of action, including online behaviour and internet safety.

Public policy making

Scottish Borders Council commissioned 12 young people to co-produce recommendations for a new anti-bullying policy in all learning settings for children and young people aged 3–18 years.

Within a year the Youth Commission presented 33 recommendations to the council in a report that will inform the development of a new approach to

definition, prevention, education, management, and implementation. The aim is to make learning environments safe, respectful and positive places, where bullying behaviour is never acceptable. The young people organised themselves into sub-groups to consider school based bullying, prejudice based bullying, and bullying and the wider community, and

as 'bullies' and 'victims' unhelpful, suggesting instead the terms "person displaying bullying behaviour" and "person experiencing bullying behaviour" as better indicators of a focus on the behaviour and not an individual. They also asked the council to lobby the Scottish Government about the pre-qualification training available to teachers on bullying behaviour, which they felt could be improved, and recommended exclusion be regarded as an inappropriate response on the basis that damaged relationships could not be rebuilt effectively if people were excluded from the learning setting.

Scottish Borders Council accepted the recommendations in March, and policy writing has now begun for the *Education and Lifelong Learning Respectful Relationships: Anti-Bullying Policy*. This will be overseen by an implementation board that includes education staff, elected members, parents and pupils.

The Scottish Borders Youth Commission on Bullying received a CoSLA Bronze Excellence Award for "one to watch" and their activities have been supported by Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders, Lothian and

Borders Police, Young Scot, and respectme. Scottish Borders Council will launch the new policy and celebrate the Youth Commission's work at a conference in November.

For more information on the Scottish Borders Youth Commission on Bullying, contact Susan Robb at srobb@scotborders.gov.uk or 01835 826815 or download the recommendations at www.scotborders.gov.uk/youth



Photo: Scottish Borders Council

preventing and managing bullying behaviour. Scottish Borders Council is the first local authority in Scotland to adopt this model of youth-led policy making, and they hope this will pave the way for more young people to work alongside elected members and council officers to create recommendations on other services and changes which affect them.

The Youth Commission's recommendations covered five areas:

collected information and evidence from parents, school pupils, teachers, senior education officers, youth workers, health professionals, police officers and other relevant people.

The report emphasised that the foundation of an effective approach requires staff who are confident and knowledgeable about preventing and managing bullying behaviour. The youth commissioners found the labelling of children and young people

A full minute of the Forum's anti-bullying meeting can be obtained from policy@childreninscotland.org.uk or 0131 222 2412. Let us know if you'd like to join the Forum mailing list.

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Children in Scotland works in partnership with the National Children's Bureau, Children in Wales and Children in Northern Ireland. Printed in Scotland.

Published by Children in Scotland – working for children and their families. Registered charity in Scotland number 83383. Registered company number SC003527.

Designer: Tracy MacMillan

ISSN 1474-9424